**Thoughts of Village Day '91 still linger on - the Villages finest hours.**

We asked Clive and Valerie Wall to record their impressions, but through a misunderstanding the report never appeared in the last issue, and three months on we still think it worth reliving the day through their eyes.

The fourth village day began in the early hours with one of the most spectacular thunderstorm for years. One's mind immediately turned to the effect of the down pour on all the cheerful bunting and house dressings that people had so busily been installing the previous evening. Miraculously, most of them survived and we were blessed with one of those magic, fresh summer mornings - such a relief after the claminess of the previous day. As the time for the procession grew nearer, there was the usual air of anticipation. Villagers emerged from their homes to encounter friends they had not seen for months (or even since the last village day!) The keen gardeners had made an early start, to secure bargains, and many were seen clutching large fuchsias or geraniums and not quite knowing what to do with them! The less energetic were enjoying a late breakfast at the Cafe de Jumelage, outside the village hall. This looked so very French and was serving all the right things to make our guests from Hambye feel at home. Those requiring more substantial fare were being lured by the smell of hamburgers exuding from a barbeque outside the Black Horse. As the parade approached, there was the inevitable chaos associated with traffic being stopped - all adding to the atmosphere. The traffic police and most of the motorists were good humoured, but a few more disgruntled folk did a quick U-turn and escaped. Then it arrived - led superbly by the skilled band of Hambye, proceeding at a measured pace and looking (and sounding) very professional. The parade included contributions from many of the village organisations. The St.John's float, "Fishers of Men", was filled with enthusiastic youngsters clad in black bin liners who were thoroughly enjoying squirting onlookers with anything from a water pistol to a washing-up liquid bottle - we got soaked! The Scouts, by contrast, were on camp with a supper menue of: crude whatsits, mules bon femme and scargoes, which must obviously have impressed our friends from Hambye! Then came the Tour de France – a collection of superb racing bikes (well almost) and tricycles, ridden by tiny tots, and bedecked with red, white and blue streamers, not to mention paper cups trailing on bits of string. Some of their mothers, not to be outdone, were showing their patriotism by wearing Union Jacks as skirts. Them came Lacey Green Productions with Brian Panter looking very dapper in his boater - quite the Maurice Chevallier look! Perhaps, it was not a coincidence that towards the end of the parade came "Allo Allo' with a Grand Lit surrounded by some very interesting legs! But to us, the star of the show was Connie Baker who must have been the nicest gypsy fortune teller you've ever come across, complete with flowing costume and flower basket.

The tombola was, as usual, a roaring success. Smiling faces could be seen clutching jars of tomato puree and the like and there were all sorts of friendly banter as to how many tickets one had taken. The car park was the site of highly competitive games of boule - but the fairly regular ‘voila’ or 'place' was a fair indication that we had a lot to learn from our French visitors! By lunchtime, a lot of the activity had moved to The Whip where the Morris dancers were performing on the corner. The crowd caused certain traffic problems - not least when a double decker bus had to negotiate turning from Pink Road into Main Road! Then, scheduled from 1p.m. but actually taking place over an hour later - not that any one cared —- the headshaving began. It was well worth waiting for Dick Williams and Steve Cromack to subject themselves to the trimmer(ess) - bit by bit it came off, first from one and then from the other, amidst demands from Dick's wife for more money to be put tin one of the buckets. Put more in one bucket and THE sign would be removed, more in the other and IT would remain. Finally, both heroes were bald and proudly donned appropriate tee shirts, amidst applause and congratulations - all very good fun for a good cause.

Later in the afternoon, many villagers gently strolled around the gardens which had been generously opened by their owners. Everyone was full of praise for the tidiness and quality of the flowers or vegetables - perhaps feeling tinges of guilt at their own attempts. One nice thing this opportunity to visit other people's gardens is that one can see our village from so many new perspectives.